

Citizen Engagement in the New Normal Fiscal Environment: Time for Participatory Performance Budgeting (PPB 2.0)?

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Introduction

For the past few years, many developed countries have been struggling with significant fiscal challenges as a result of the Great Recession. According to the International Monetary Fund (2012), the average budget deficit of all governments jumped from 2 percent of the world's gross domestic products (GDP) in 2008 to about 6.7 percent in 2009, and about 5.5 percent in 2010. The fiscal situation in the U.S., Spain, Japan, and the United Kingdom is relatively worse, with their national deficits reaching almost or beyond 10 percent of their GDP in 2009.

Global economic slowdown is the primary cause of the deficit problems. In the U.S., for example, the annual percentage change in GDP slowed from 4.9 percent in 2007 to 1.9 percent in 2008 and to a negative 2.2 percent in 2010 (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2012), while the national unemployment rate jumped from 4.6 percent in 2007 to 5.8 percent in 2008, and eventually to 9.6 percent in 2010, a historical high since the early 1980s (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012). Even though the Great Recession officially ended in 2009, the national unemployment rate has remained high at about 8 percent.

As a result, the U.S. federal government continues to experience weak revenue growth. At the same time, social spending, such as unemployment insurance, and healthcare spending continue to increase. . These policies led to a federal deficit of about \$1.3 trillion in FY2011 and FY2012, respectively, which is significantly higher than the deficit levels over the past two decades (US OMB 2012). Many U.S. state and local governments also struggled with significant budget shortfalls. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 31 out of 50 states in the U.S. have a budget gap of about \$55 billion in FY2012-FY2013 (about 10 percent of the total budget on average), even though the U.S. national economy has begun to recover slowly. Due to

weak tax collection and growing education and healthcare obligations, many state governments in the U.S. still see a funding gap of more than 10 percent of their annual budgets.¹

Many citizens have become increasingly frustrated with the inability of their elected representatives to do more to change the situation. At the same time, there is little consensus among the public and politicians on how the government should respond to these economic problems, what tax policies are appropriate, and whether social, welfare, and education spending should be cut significantly in this challenging time. Public frustration has led to some drastic public action, such as demonstrations and official-citizen conflicts. The “Occupy Wall Street” movement is a clear example of the social discontent caused by the Great Recession.

Unfortunately, relief for these fiscal and economic challenges may not come soon. In the U.S., for example, the U.S. Congressional Budget Office (2012) estimates that the U.S. economy will continue to grow by only 2 percent in the near future, and the U.S. will probably not resume its historical GDP growth path until 2018. The National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO) in the U.S. also suggests that the negative economic impact of this Great Recession is likely to linger longer and the economic recovery will be slower compared with previous recessions in the 1980s and in the early 2000s (NASBO, 2011).

Hence, constant fiscal pressure will be a “new normal” for policymakers in the coming decade. What may make the matter worse in the U.S. is the wave of babyboomer retirement in the foreseeable future and the resulting spending pressure on welfare and healthcare. Unless policymakers and the public understand the fiscal reality more clearly and have an honest and rational dialogue about the tough choices needed to be made, social discontent with government institutions and their budgetary decisions is likely to continue.

The purpose of this paper is to re-examine the role of citizen participation in this new normal fiscal environment and how it should be organized and integrated with performance budgeting in the future. The first part of the paper provides an overview of the commonly used mechanisms in participatory budgeting, discusses their respective strengths and limitations, and suggests why public officials need to use a portfolio approach to engage citizens. The second part of the paper uses citizen survey results in the U.S. to examine how citizens view different participatory mechanisms and how their engagement preferences vary by demographic characteristics and other factors. The results affirm that no participatory mechanism can serve all citizens effectively, and it is therefore important to think about how these mechanisms should be combined to ensure equity in participation and access to information within a community. The third part of the paper suggests further that citizen engagement will become even more important in the coming decade and should be more integrated with performance budgeting to

¹ According to Oliff, et al (2012), California, Connecticut, Louisiana, Maine, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin have budget gaps of more than 10 percent of the state budget. The situation is especially challenging in Nevada (36 percent budget gap), Oregon (24 percent budget gap), and Texas (24 percent budget gap).

deal with the challenges of “doing more with less”. The paper proposes a new model of “participatory performance budgeting” or “performance budgeting 2.0”, and contrasts it with the traditional models of participatory budgeting and performance budgeting. The paper then concludes by suggesting that future budgetary exercises cannot avoid many tough choices, especially those that are related to intergenerational equity issues. As a result, policymakers and budgeters need to create more rational and evidence-based public dialogues about budgetary decisions and how tax money should be used to accomplish what social and economic goals. Hence, despite many criticisms about the limitations of the existing mechanisms of citizen participation and performance budgeting, both will likely to continue and may even be needed more.

Citizen Participation in Public Budgeting – Promises, Practices, and Limitations of Traditional Tools

Informing citizens about budgetary choices and asking them to provide input in the decision-making process has been one of the core elements of democratic governance and policy reforms in recent decades (Simonsen and Robbins, 2000; Ebdon and Franklin, 2004; Ebdon and Franklin, 2006). For example, at the turn of the 19th century, many U.S. local governments already began to experiment with various participatory tools, such as budget newsstands, public forums, and public budget reports, which tried to help citizens understand the financial condition of their governments and make officials accountable for their decisions (Kahn, 1997). Citizen engagement practices in budgeting have become even more widespread during the past few decades. In the U.S., for example, many local governments now have citizen surveys, neighborhood forums, and special townhall meetings to solicit public input in the budgetary process (Simonsen and Robbins, 2000; Franklin, Ho, and Ebdon, 2009). In Australia, a few communities, such as Randwick and Waverley City in Sydney, have also experimented with participatory budgeting in recent years.

The growing popularity of citizen engagement in the budgeting process can also be found in many developing countries. The most notable example is the participatory budgeting reform in Brazil in the late 1980s and 1990s (Sousa Santos 2005; Wampler, 2007). Similar reforms can also be found in other Latin American countries (Goldfrank, 2006), new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe (Krenjova and Raudla, 2012), and many other developing countries (United Nations, 2005; Shah, 2007). Even countries that have strong executive-dominated governments, such as China, are also experimenting with pilot reforms allowing citizens to have more voice in the budgetary process (He, 2011; Wu and Wang, 2012).

There are many reasons why citizen participation has been emphasized more in recent decades. First, it is consistent with democratic ideals and the value of “civism” in public administration (Frederickson, 1982; Nabatchi, 2010). Moreover, public participation is important because it helps public managers solicit new ideas from the public and tap into various community resources and expertise in solving difficult policy problems (Head, 2011). In

developing countries, examples from many developed countries and the effort of international organizations to promote budget transparency and democratic values also provide extra incentives for these countries to adopt the practice.

Different tools and mechanisms have been used to engage citizens in the budgetary process, but they all have their own limitations (Ebdon and Franklin, 2004, 2006; Franklin, Ho and Ebdon, 2009). Some mechanisms, such as press releases, public reports, and budget newsstands, only lead to one-way information dissemination to citizens. Some other mechanisms, such as opinion surveys, neighborhood meetings, and townhall meetings, allow for two-way communication between government officials and citizens and can be effective mechanisms for preference revelation. However, they have varying degrees of space and time constraints and transaction cost problems. Some mechanisms, such as focus groups and citizen budget committees, allow for more in-depth discussion but require a significant time commitment by citizens and government officials. Also, to be effective and meaningful, these mechanisms usually only allow for a small number of citizens to participate, and participants may not be representative of the community. Neighborhood or townhall meetings may be tailored to the interests of a broader audience, but they do not allow for in-depth discussion among all participants, and they impose greater time and space constraints, such as when and where citizens may attend. Online discussion forums or social media tools can overcome these constraints, but they are limited by the fact that not all citizens have equal access to these technologies and have the same capacity or interest in understanding and using these communicative tools.

More fundamentally, all participatory mechanisms face a contextual constraint – not all citizens want to invest a lot of their personal time and resources to participate in public affairs, and some of them face real, institutional barriers to participate because of job constraints, language barriers, and other social and cultural barriers (Wilson, 1999). Also, there are different purposes for engaging the public (Ebdon and Franklin, 2006; Lukensmeyer and Torres, 2006; Nabatchi, 2011). Sometimes, government officials may want to solicit new ideas and seek out public preferences; sometimes, they need public support, especially when tough decisions have to be made, and sometimes, they simply want to educate and inform the public.

Because of the inherent limitations and strengths of different participatory mechanisms and their ability to serve different participatory purposes, and given the fundamental questions about the public's willingness to participate, government officials need to think creatively and use a portfolio strategy to engage citizens so that diverse opportunities are offered to suit different participatory preferences and needs. Table 1 shows the characteristics of these mechanisms and how well they serve the needs of different stages of the budgetary process.

Table 1.

	<i>Budget newsstand / public notices</i>	<i>Media/ press releases</i>	<i>Email / cellphone text messages</i>	<i>Public report (paper or online)</i>	<i>Opinion survey (paper or online)</i>	<i>Neighborhood / townhall meeting</i>	<i>Citizen committee, panel, or focus group</i>	<i>Budget simulation (online, on paper, or in meeting)</i>	<i>Visit with officials / filing complaints (in person or online)</i>	<i>Protest</i>
Initiator/organizer (G = Government, C=citizen)	G	G	G, C	G	G, C	G, C	G, C	G, C	C	C
Direction of communication	One-way	One-way	One-way	One-way	Two-way	Two-way	Two-way	Two-way	Two-way	Two-way
Informational intensity	Med.	Low	Low	High	High	High	High	High	Low	Low
Analytical intensity	Low	Low	Low	Low	High	High	High	High	Med.	Low
Physical space constraint	High	None	None	None	None	High	Med.	Depends	Depends	High
Time constraints for users	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	High	High	High	High	High
Cost constraints	Low	Med	Low	High	High	Med	Med	High	Med	High
Political risk / uncertainty	Low	Med	Med	Low	Low	High	Med	Med	High	High
Application in:										
Dissemination of policy priorities and budget information	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y		Y	
Public feedback and deliberation of policy and budget priorities					Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Approval or ranking of policy priorities					Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Allocating fiscal resources to policy or programs					Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Approval of budget allocation					Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Monitoring budget execution and program performance	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Usage of Engagement Mechanisms – the Citizen Perspective

At the same time, one may also look at the effectiveness and appropriateness of different participatory mechanisms from the citizen's perspective. Since citizens with different socio-economic and racial backgrounds may face different language and cultural contexts and may view the right to voice differently in the local political context; it is important to evaluate how different citizen groups view and prefer to use different participatory tools.

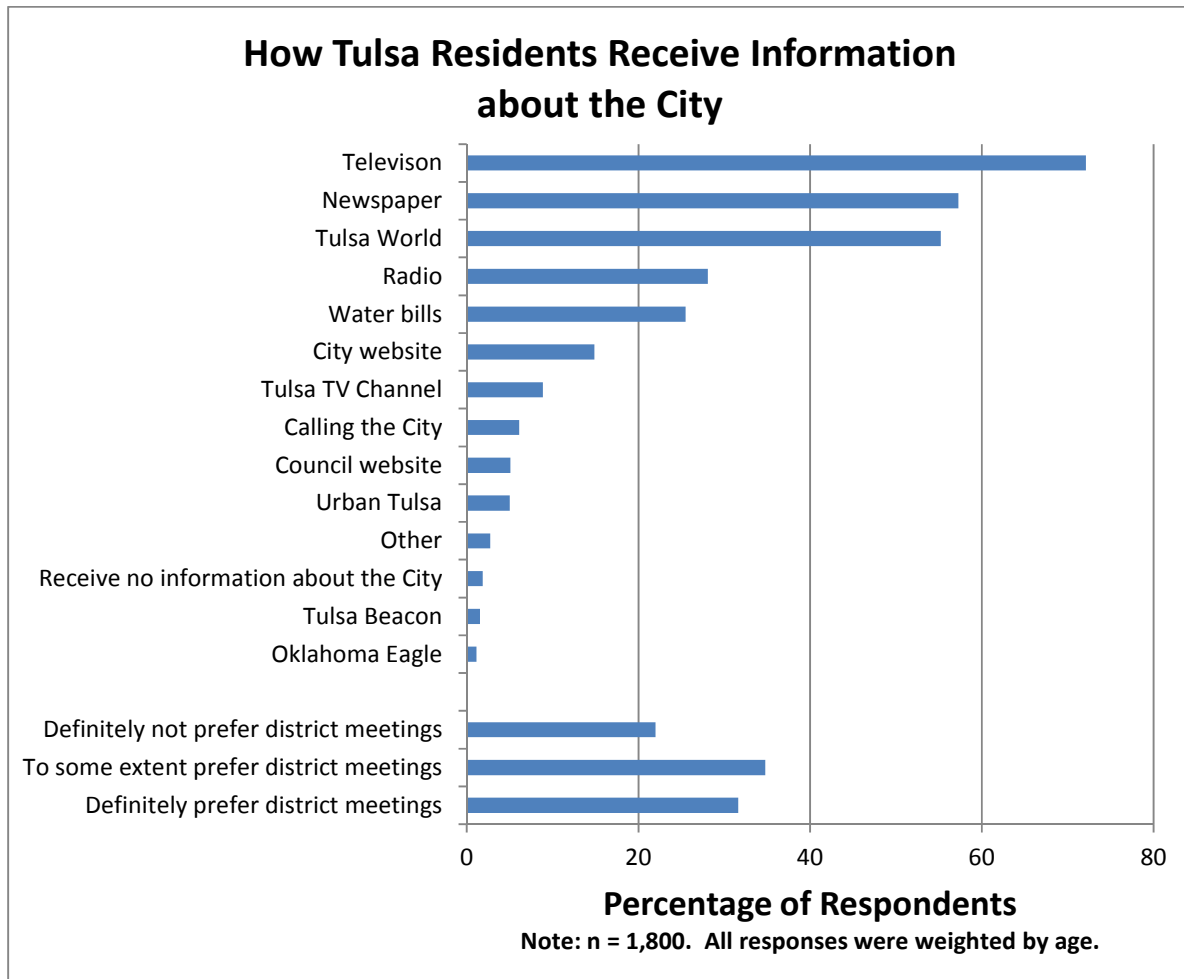
Between December 2010 and January 2011, the city of Tulsa in the state of Oklahoma in the U.S. launched a citizen survey about public service satisfaction. The City is a mid-sized city with a population about of 392,000 and per-capita income of about \$26,069, which is close to the U.S. average (\$27,334) (U.S. Census, 2012). In addition to questions about quality of life and public service rating, the survey also asked citizens how they received information about the City and whether they were interested in having neighborhood townhall meetings to discuss city policy issues. A total of 1,803 responses were received, representing a response rate of 35.9 percent.²

Figure 1 shows the survey results. Interestingly, despite the growing importance of the Internet and social media, TV and newspapers still reach out to a majority of citizens. Close to 70 percent of Tulsa residents surveyed got information about the City through TV channels, and about 55 percent of residents relied on local newspapers, such as the local paper *Tulsa World*. Radio programs and informational inserts in water bills by the city government were distant third and fourth options, used by no more than 30 percent of respondents. Only about 15 percent of the respondents reported that they used the city website, and only about 10 percent watched the official city TV channel. Also, the majority of citizens (more than 65 percent) strongly or somewhat preferred to have neighborhood-level, face-to-face meetings with elected officials. Only about 22 percent of the respondents indicated that they did not want any district level meetings.

Furthermore, the majority of residents still preferred some form of face-to-face meeting at the neighborhood level. About one-third of Tulsa residents definitely preferred this communicative platform, and another one-third somewhat preferred this also. Hence, despite the rise of electronic communications, government officials still cannot ignore face-to-face community outreach to citizens.

² The survey was conducted by Shapard Research for the City of Tulsa. For more details of the survey results, please refer to Shapard Research (2011).

Figure 1.

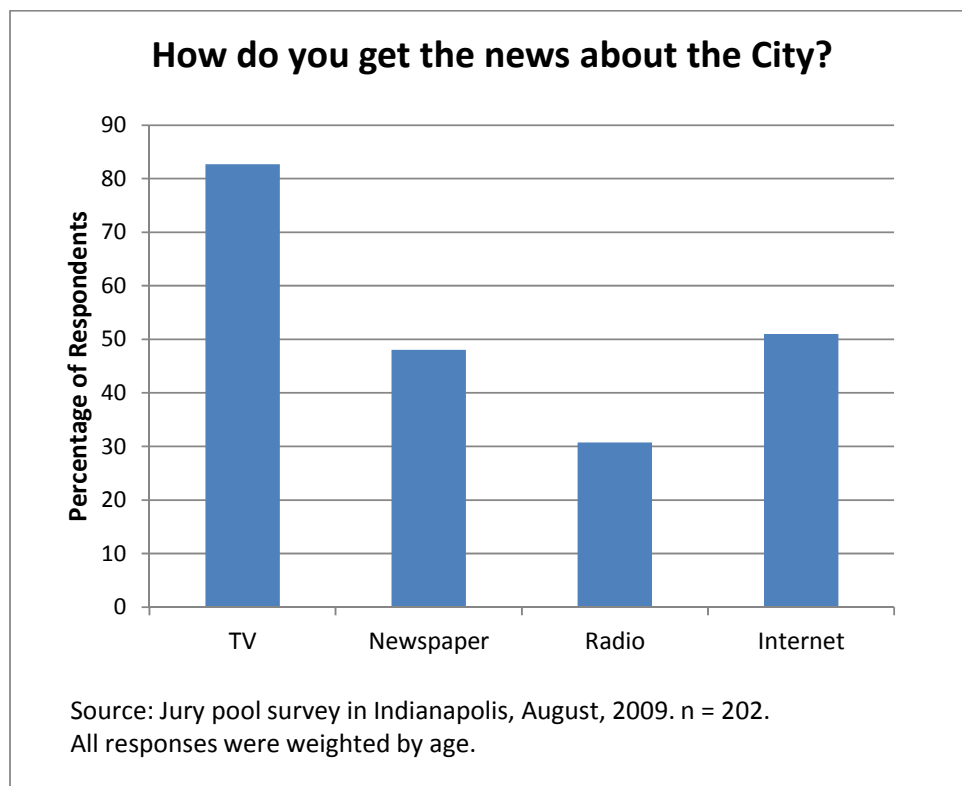


The significant reliance on traditional communicative channels in the Tulsa survey is consistent with earlier survey findings from the City of Indianapolis in the State of Indiana. Indianapolis is the 13th largest city in the U.S., with a population of about 820,000 and per-capita income of about \$24,000. Like most major metropolitan areas, it is more racially diverse, with a 39 percent non-white population. In August 2009, the City of Indianapolis conducted a citizen survey by asking citizens randomly selected by the county court who were waiting for jury assignments in the courtrooms to rate the quality of life in Indianapolis. In that survey, citizens were also asked about the communication channels they used to get news about the city and how they would like their government to communicate with them.

Figure 2 shows the results of the Indianapolis citizen survey. Like citizens in Tulsa, television remained the most important source of information about the city for the majority of citizens. About 83 percent of Indianapolis residents relied on television to learn about current events. Also like the findings in Tulsa, about 50 percent and 30 percent of the respondents still

used newspaper and radio, respectively, as their information sources about the city. At the same time, about 51 percent of the respondents relied on the Internet to catch the news about the city. Since the Indianapolis survey did not differentiate among different types of websites, the findings are not exactly comparable with the Tulsa survey, which only asked citizens about their use of the city's own website. However, the Indianapolis survey clearly shows that the internet in general, perhaps not just the governmental website, is becoming an important source of information today for citizens.

Figure 2.



At the same time, it is interesting to note that the majority of Indianapolis residents still want traditional means of communication to interact with the government and do not want electronic communication to replace traditional media totally. Among the top 3 choices of preferred communication mechanisms between the city government and citizens, a regular mail newsletter, not email or social media, is the top pick by the majority of Indianapolis citizens (see Table 2). The city website and electronic newsletter ranked second and third as preferred communication options, with about 50 percent of the respondents picking them as one of their top three forms of public communication. About 35 percent preferred neighborhood meetings as one of the top 3 choices. This percentage is comparable to the percentage of Tulsa residents who definitely preferred district/neighborhood level meetings (see Figure 1). Interestingly, a significant majority of citizens (over 80 percent) did not prefer phone voice or text messages or social media tools, such as Facebook and Twitter, as the media for the government to contact

them regularly. Although this trend may have changed since 2009, other studies have also found that a considerable portion of citizens are concerned about privacy issues associated with social media and networks and how much personal information is revealed through these tools (Barnes 2006). As a result, some citizens may not prefer the government to use social media tools to contact them for fear that “Big Brother” may know too much about their preferences, policy views, and political activities.

Table 2. What are the best ways for the City to communicate with citizens about community issues and city services? – Indianapolis survey findings

	Top choice	2nd choice	3rd choice	Not picked
Regular mail newsletter	33.7	16.3	10.9	39.1
City website	22.3	12.9	14.4	50.5
Electronic newsletters by email	19.3	14.9	8.9	56.9
Annual neighborhood meeting	13.4	8.9	13.4	64.4
Telephone voice messages	6.4	6.4	5.0	82.2
Facebook	3.5	5.4	4.5	86.6
Monthly text messages to cell phones	2.5	0.5	5.9	91.1
Twitter	1.5	0.0	1.5	97.0

Note: N = 202. The survey was conducted in August, 2009 among randomly selected citizens who were waiting for jury assignments in courtrooms. All responses were weighted by age.

To further understand what factors are associated with citizens’ preferences of different communicative platforms, I use the Tulsa data to examine the correlation between media choices and the survey respondents’ demographic and socio-economic profiles and prior experiences. Table 3 summarizes the results, which show the following:

- Tulsa residents who would contact the city departments are more active seekers of information and tend to rely on different communicative platforms to learn more about the City.
- Those who were contacted by the police tend to pay more attention to government-initiated platforms, such as the city website, water bills, and the city TV channel.
- Minority residents as well as the younger generation (age < 25 years old) tend to be less engaged and informed, while those who are older than 55 years old tend to pay more attention to what is going on in Tulsa.
- The city website is used more by those who are 25-54 years old and significantly less by those who are older than 55 years old.
- The more-educated and home owners are more likely to learn about the City through different platforms, especially through newspaper, the radio (e.g., public radio), water bills, and the city website.
- Higher-income residents are more likely to read the news and use the city website, but lower-income residents demonstrate the opposite pattern.

Table 3. Association between Different Communication Platforms and the Demographic and Socio-Economic Profiles of Tulsa Residents

	Tulsa World	Newspaper	TV	Radio	Tulsa TV Channel	Water bills	City website
Contact by Police					***	**	***
Traffic-Related Police Contacts							
Police Contacts - Crime Victims				**	***	**	
Police Contacts - Other reasons			+				
Number of dept. contacts	***	***	+	**	***	***	***
Contacted the police before				***	***	***	***
Contacted Public Works before	**	**			**	***	
Contacted the Permit Office before				+	***		***
Contacted Code Enforcement before	+	+			***		***
Contacted the City Council before	+	+		***	***	***	***
Contacted the Mayor's Office before	***	***		+	***	***	***
Contacted the fire department before							
Contacted the Parks Dept. before	**	***		***	***	***	***
Contacted other depts. Before	**	**				***	
African American	***	***		***		*	*
Hispanic	***	***			***	*	
Native American	***	***				*	
Younger than 25	*	*			*	***	
Age 25-44	***	***		***	*	*	***
Age 45-54				+			***
Age 55 or older	***	***			**	**	***
Female					*	**	
Married	**	**					**
Education	***	***		***		***	***
Edu: Less than college	***	***	*	***		***	***
Edu: college	+	+				**	
Edu: Graduate degrees	***	***		**			***
House owner	***	***	**	**	**	***	
Live in Tulsa < 5 years					*		
Live in Tulsa 5-10 years	***	***		*	*		
Live in Tulsa > 10 years	***	***	+	+	***		
Income	***	***		**		**	***
Inc. < 25K	***	***					***
Inc. 25K-50K						+	
Inc. 50K - 99K	***	***					***
Inc. < 25K, married	*	*					***
Inc. 25K-50K, married							
Inc. 50K - 99K, married		+	*				***
Inc. < 25K, single	***	***					***
Inc. 25K-50K, single						+	
Inc. 50K - 99K, single	**	**					***

Note: chi-square test results. * significant at the 10 percent level ** significant at the 5 percent level *** significant at the 1 percent level

Table 4. Association between District Meeting Preferences and the Demographic and Socio-Economic Profiles of Tulsa Residents

	Definitely prefer district meetings	May prefer district meetings	Definitely not prefer district meetings
Contact by Police			
Traffic-Related Police Contacts			
Police Contacts - Crime Victims			
Police Contacts - Other reasons			
Number of dept. contacts			+***
Contacted the police before			
Contacted Public Works before			+**
Contacted the Permit Office before			+**
Contacted Code Enforcement before		+**	+**
Contacted the City Council before			+**
Contacted the Mayor's Office before			+**
Contacted the fire department before			
Contacted the Parks Dept. before			
Contacted other depts. Before			
African American	+***		-***
Hispanic			-**
Native American			
Younger than 25			
Age 25-44	+***		-**
Age 45-54			
Age 55 or older	-***		
Female			-**
Married	-**		+***
Education	-***		+***
Edu: Less than college	+***		-***
Edu: college	-**	+**	+
Edu: Graduate degrees	-**		+***
House owner	-***		+***
Live in Tulsa < 5 years			
Live in Tulsa 5-10 years			-*
Live in Tulsa > 10 years			+
Income	-***		+***
Inc. < 25K		+**	-***
Inc. 25K-50K			-**
Inc. 50K - 99K			+***
Inc. < 25K, married			-*
Inc. 25K-50K, married			-**
Inc. 50K - 99K, married			+
Inc. < 25K, single	+***	+	-***
Inc. 25K-50K, single			
Inc. 50K - 99K, single	-**	+	+

Note: chi-square test results. * significant at the 10 percent level ** significant at the 5 percent level *** significant at the 1 percent level

Table 4 analyzes the relationship between the preferences for district-level meetings and the characteristics of Tulsa residents. The results shows that African American residents prefer strongly to have district-level council meetings. Less-educated residents, those who are 25-44 years old, and those who have lived in Tulsa for more than 10 years also have the same preference. Interestingly, those who are more educated and wealthier prefer not to have district-level meetings. This is probably caused by the fact that they have many alternatives to learn about the City and more access to city officials (see Table 3). This is reflected in Table 4, which shows that there is a strong association between those who have contacted City departments and those who prefer not to have district-level meetings.

Practices of Citizen Engagement

The results above confirm that there are distinctive preferences of public communication and engagement among different demographic groups, and there is no “one-size fits all” approach that can satisfy all groups at all times. City administrators and community leaders need to acknowledge the limitations of individual engagement strategy and the different preferences of citizens, and try to come up with a portfolio of engagement strategies so that all citizens can have equal access to information and equal opportunities to participate in the decision-making process. Also, engagement has to happen regularly throughout the year, not just during the budget proposal time, so that city officials and policymakers can constantly re-evaluate the how resources should be allocated and what results public spending has brought to the community.

This is exactly what Indianapolis has been doing through its citizen engagement strategies. In addition to city council meetings and budget committee hearings that the public can attend in person, public meetings are broadcasted live on the city government’s TV channel and are also archived on the city’s website. Furthermore, Indianapolis uses various mechanisms to engage citizens in different ways throughout the year to evaluate its budget execution results and solicit public input. For example,

- the Office of Finance and Management presents quarterly budget reviews to the City Council and to citizens in public meetings to keep them informed about the city’s financial conditions;
- throughout the year, the Mayor’s office organizes monthly “mayor’s night-outs” in different neighborhoods, which are attended by the Mayor and various departmental representatives to meet with citizens for two hours and hear their concerns, answer questions, and tell them about city policies and some recent happenings in the community (see Figure 3);
- the city publishes different electronic newsletters and invites citizens to sign up for these e-newsletters based on their interests and policy concerns (see Figure 4);
- the city website has a social media web portal for citizens and invites citizens to stay in touch based on their social media preferences (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and topics of interest (see Figure 5).

- the City allows citizens to file complaints and service requests by phone, online through the city's website, or via "apps" in mobile devices. Citizens are called back by the Mayor's Action Center to check if their cases have been resolved satisfactorily, and during the call-backs, citizens can voice any concerns or opinions that will be referred to the appropriate departments for actions.

Figure 3. Mayor's Night-outs in Indianapolis

THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE CITY OF

INDIANAPOLIS AND MARION COUNTY

About Indy

Find a Person

Find an Agency



Mayor's Action Center

Government TV

Online Services

CITY & COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

COURTS & LAWS

CULTURE & RECREATION

EDUCATION & JOBS

Indianapolis

NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

PUBLIC SAFETY

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SEARCH

IndyGov > Local Government > Mayor > Get in Touch > Mayor's Night Out

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Mayor's Action Center

Get in Touch

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Contact Us

Request a Certificate

Request a Greeting

Request a Proclamation

City Newsletter Signup

Government TV

Social Media

Transparency

Mayor's Night Out

Mayor's Programs

Mayor's Office Initiatives

Press Room





CALENDAR of EVENTS

September 2012

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Mayor's Night Out



Mayor's Night Out is a monthly event that provides community members in the areas serviced by the Mayor's 10 Neighborhood Liaisons an opportunity to engage in an up-close, one-on-one with Mayor Ballard to discuss the issues that affect their communities in a positive or adverse manner.

Mayor Ballard and the key members of his executive staff including the Deputy Mayors, and Directors of Metropolitan Development, Public Works, Public Safety and the Mayor's Action Center are available to provide on the spot answers and to gather information on issues that may require additional follow-up.

In addition, Mayor's Night Out provides community members with the perfect opportunity (through a bus tour) to highlight their respective community accomplishments and/or challenges.

The next Mayor's Night Out is:

Thursday, August 9, 2012

Warren Township

Figure 4. Opportunities for Citizens to Sign up for Different E-Newsletters

THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE CITY OF

INDIANAPOLIS AND MARION COUNTY

[About Indy](#)
[Find a Person](#)
[Find an Agency](#)


[Mayor's Action Center](#)
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CALENDAR of EVENTS

September 2012

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

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Highlighted Events

Juror groups required to report Thursday 9/6/12 are: 8, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 94. (9/6/2012)

"Show Me The Money" Business Finance Boot Camp (9/12/2012)

"Show Me The Money" Lending Fair (9/19/2012)

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Enter the information below to Subscribe/Unsubscribe from the email groups:
Your Name:
Company Name:
E-mail Address: *

Select the type of Email you would like to receive:
☒ HTML ☐ Text

Select the lists that you wish to Subscribe/Unsubscribe (Check all that apply to you):

- ☐ 38th Street - 38th Street Rehabilitation Project
- ☐ CityIndy - Mayor's Office/City of Indianapolis Newsletter
- ☐ Construction - Public Works Construction Bids and Quote Notification
- ☐ DMWBD Community Outreach - Minority Business Public Outreach
- ☐ Election - Update from the Election Board
- ☐ ERP Update (IndyCORPS)
- ☐ Events - Indianapolis Special Events Newsletter
- ☐ Hhcorp - Health and Hospital Corporation Bid and Quote Notifications
- ☐ IMPD North District - Newsletter of the Police Department's North District
- ☐ Knozone - Knozone Action Day Alerts
- ☐ Moda - Mayor's Office of Disability Affairs
- ☐ MPO - MPO Information Newsletter
- ☐ Parks News - Indy Parks and Recreation Newsletter
- ☐ Services - Services Bid and Quote Notification
- ☐ Streams - Raw Sewage Overflow Public Notification Program
- ☐ Supplies - Supply Bid and Quote Notification
- ☐ SustainIndy - SustainIndy Newsletter
- ☐ Taxnotif - Marion County Property Tax Due Date Reminder
- ☐ Traffic - Street Closings and Traffic Restrictions

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[Contact Us](#)
[Request a Certificate](#)
[Request a Greeting](#)
[Request a Proclamation](#)
[City Newsletter Signup](#)
[Government TV](#)
[Social Media](#)

- Transparency

[CIB RFI Responses](#)
[Contracts](#)
[Boards & Commissions](#)
[Lobbyist](#)
[Mayor's Night Out](#)

- Mayor's Programs
 - Mayor's Office Initiatives
 - Press Room

CALENDAR of EVENTS

September 2012

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

View Entire Month

Highlighted Events

Juror groups required to report Thursday 9/6/12 are: 8, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 94. (9/6/2012)

"Show Me The Money"
Business Finance Boot Camp (9/12/2012)

"Show Me The Money"
Lending Fair (9/19/2012)

IndyGov > Local Government > Mayor > Get in Touch > Social Media

Social Media by Department

- Mayor's Office
 - <http://twitter.com/MayorBallard>
 - <http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=2037471&id=6817184#/MayorGregBallard>
 - <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Mayor-Greg-Ballard-Campaign/105627442831785>
- Department of Public Safety
 - <http://twitter.com/IndianapolisDPS>
 - http://twitter.com/#!/IMPD_News
 - <http://www.facebook.com/pages/IndyUnsolved/106102177628>
 - http://www.facebook.com/pages/City-of-Indianapolis-Department-of-Public-Safety/104114232974805?ref=ts&__a
- Division of Homeland Security (Public Safety)
 - <http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Division-of-Homeland-Security-City-of-Indianapolis/129735873733124>
- Mayor's Office of Sustainability
 - <http://twitter.com/Sustainindy>
 - <http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/SustainIndy/118253688193822>
- Indianapolis Department of Public Works
 - <http://twitter.com/IndyDPW>
- Indy Snow Force
 - <http://twitter.com/IndySnowForce>
- Knozone
 - <http://twitter.com/#!/knozone>
 - <http://www.facebook.com/#!/cleansairmatters>
- Indy Parks and Recreation
 - <http://twitter.com/#!/IndyParksandRec>
 - <http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Indy-Parks-Recreation/144608415383>
- Indianapolis Downtown Inc.
 - <http://twitter.com/#!/IndyDT>
- Drug Free Marion County
 - <http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=2037471&id=6817184#/pages/Marion-County-Drug-Free/161141970576463>
- Arts Council of Indianapolis
 - <http://twitter.com/#!/artscouncilindy>
 - <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Arts-Council-of-Indianapolis/124310870915133>

OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE CITY OF

Indianapolis

INDIANAPOLIS & MARION COUNTY

Through these participatory channels, public opinions and feedback on city services are collected and analyzed. These results often become part of the performance audit done by the Office of Audits and Performance under the City Controller's Office and are presented in regular "INDYSTAT" meetings. In these meetings, departmental officials are asked to review their budgetary conditions and operational performance before selected cabinet officials, including the Chief of Staff, the City Controller, Director of Constituent Services, and the City's Legal Counsel, and occasionally, the Mayor himself attends these meetings. Officials then discuss how different operations can reduce waste, increase cost-effectiveness, and enhance responsiveness and user satisfaction. Figure 6 shows an example from the Department of Code Enforcement, which presented their INDYSTAT review recently on June 14, 2012. Discussion results in INDYSTAT meetings are documented and published on the city's website, and insights from these meetings are used to prepare for future budget requests from the departments.

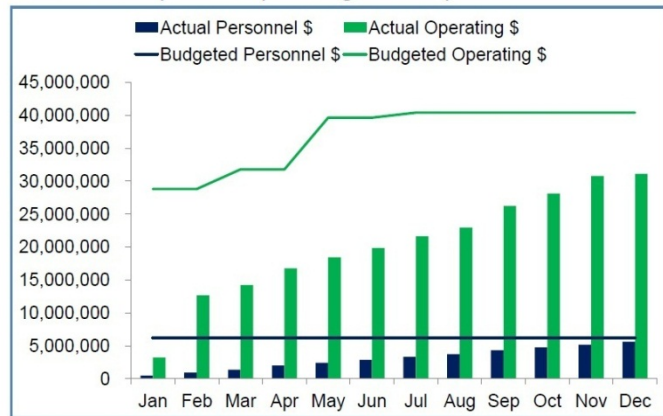
Other cities may choose a different portfolio approach to engage citizens in the budget preparation, legislative, and execution processes. For example, a survey study by Franklin, Ho, and Ebdon (2009) about participatory mechanisms in U.S. Midwest cities shows that the majority of the responding cities (70 percent) use public hearings to invite citizen input in the budgetary process. About 40 percent have special budgeting meetings, and about 10 percent have neighborhood-level budget meetings with citizens. Focus-groups, citizen budget committees, or budget simulations are less commonly used (less than 10 percent of the responding cities). Also, the majority of cities use more than one mechanism of citizen participation, usually a combination of public hearings and another type of participatory mechanisms, such as citizen survey or citizen budget committees. The choice of engagement strategies seems to be driven mostly by the professionalism of city administrators and the political environment of a community (Ebdon and Franklin, 2006). For example, past studies show that cities with professional managers rather than with the strong mayor form of government are more likely to use citizen surveys and other participatory tools in the budgetary process, probably because these cities are less politicized and professional managers may embrace democratic participatory values more strongly because of their professional training (Ebdon and Franklin, 2004; Franklin, Ho, and Ebdon, 2009).

Figure 6. Indianapolis' INDYSTAT review – Extracts from the Presentation by the Department of Code Enforcement

2011 Budgeted to Actual

(Cumulative) Expenses + Encumbrances

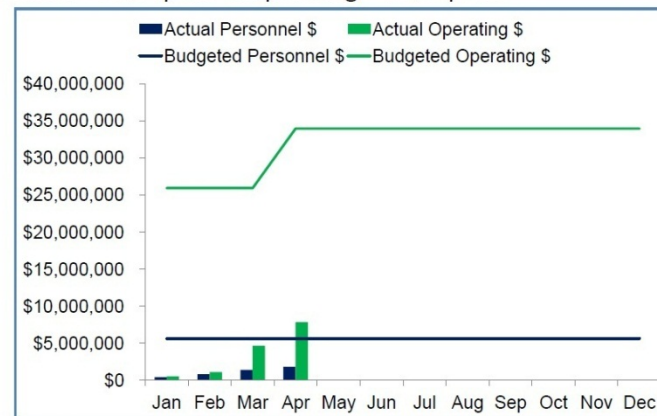
Personnel = 90% spent & Operating = 77% spent



2012 Budgeted to Actual YTD

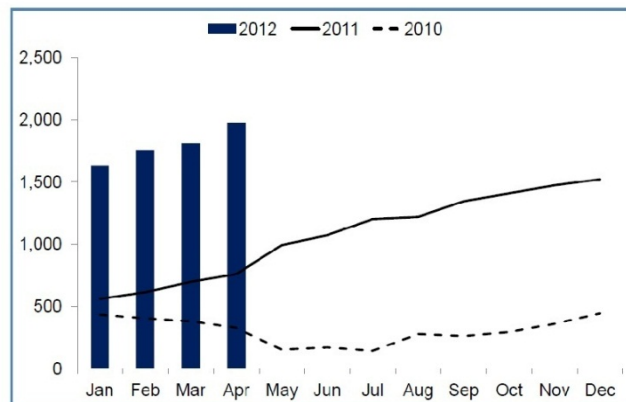
(Cumulative) Expenses + Encumbrances

Personnel = 33% spent & Operating = 23% spent



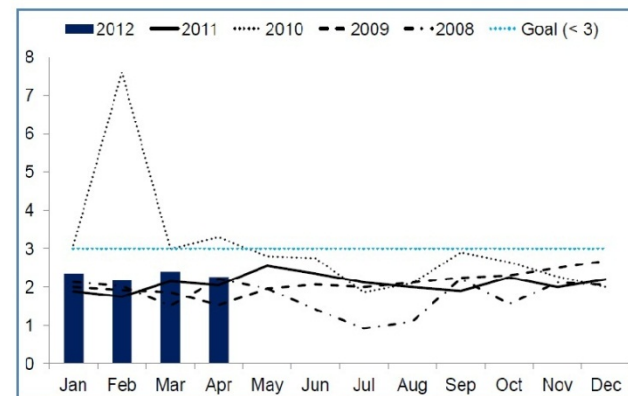
of Properties on

Abandoned Housing Case Load



Average Days to Docket a Petition

2012 up 17% compared to Jan – Apr 2011



Source: <http://www.indy.gov/eGov/City/OAP/IndyStat/Pages/2012IndyStatMeetings.aspx>

The Future of Participatory Budgeting – Participatory Performance Budgeting 2.0

While many developed countries or even some developing countries have a strong democratic tradition and have institutionalized all kinds of participatory mechanisms, past studies have also pointed out that citizen participation mechanisms in the budgetary process may attract few citizen participants, yield poor results, and make little impact. For example, many townhall meetings or budget hearings in the U.S. have very few attendees, and most participants tend to be older and have lived in their communities for a long time. Online tools may get some younger residents to participate more actively, but even those tools may have limited number of subscribers.

These criticisms about public involvement are certainly valid and important, and government officials and community leaders have to set realistic expectation about how much citizens really want to participate in public affairs, whether many of them can understand fully the content and complexity of budgetary decisions, and how much citizen participation can actually impact the quality of budgetary decision-making given all the structural and political constraints faced by elected officials.

At the same time, it is equally important to point out that the purpose of participatory budgeting is not just about informing decision-makers and helping them make better decisions. Participation is also needed to educate the public, create two-way communication between officials and citizens to build greater trust and a strong sense of community, and rally greater political support for tough budgetary decisions that elected officials have to make in certain economic circumstances (Franklin, Ho, and Ebdon, 2009). Furthermore, as suggested in the earlier discussion, all participatory mechanisms have some limitations. So it is important to use a portfolio strategy of engagement so that limitations of one type of participatory mechanism can be compensated by the strengths of other mechanisms.

More fundamentally, perhaps government officials also need to rethink what “participatory budgeting” in the 21st century should be like and how the public should be engaged. There are several things policymakers and government officials need to keep in mind:

- Citizens expect the government to use their tax money effectively to perform and deliver real results that enhance their quality of life.
- At the same time, citizens do not often fully understand the legal, ethical, organizational, financial, and political constraints faced by government agencies, and many of them cannot afford a lot of time and resources to stay engaged. Therefore, it is the responsibility of government officials to keep them informed in the most cost-effective manner.
- Budgetary decisions involve two levels of judgment – at the macro policy level, policymakers need to decide what is the appropriate level of taxation and spending that the public will accept and what values and policy goals government programs and

spending are expected to accomplish; and at the micro-organizational level, how program resources should be allocated to deliver results given the public's expectations and demand and the capacity constraints imposed by macro-level decisions (Ho, 2011).

Public officials need public input at both levels of decision-making.

- Given the level of debt and structural deficits many countries are facing today, policymakers will be forced to reduce spending, and many agencies will have to do more with less or even do less with less; as result, it is even more important to seek public input on what “more” or “less” the public wants given the reduced availability of resources.

Hence, even though participatory budgeting has not been perfected, and there are many limitations on the existing mechanisms of public engagement, it is a political necessity that government officials need to involve the public more in budgetary decision-making given the new normal fiscal environment. At the same time, it is equally important to deliver real results and communicate them effectively to the public. Participation without performance will not build public trust and political support in the long run. It may give the public a false sense of political empowerment, but when the public eventually realizes that their input does not lead to more effective policymaking and good public services, the democratic process will be discredited and public trust in governmental institutions will eventually decline, as experienced in many developed countries (Norris, 2011).

It is important for practices of participatory budgeting in the 21st century to embrace these political and policy realities. This requires new thinking on participatory budgeting that integrates not only budgetary decision-making and citizen participation, but also performance measurement, performance management, performance reporting, and public communication. For a long time, performance measurement and management has been regarded as a managerial exercise, and performance budgeting as a non-political, economic analysis of budgetary decision-making. Citizens have had very little role to play in both; citizen participation has in fact been totally separate from the two reform movements. But given the fiscal and political challenges in the new normal environment, the two must be integrated. I call this model “participatory performance budgeting 2.0” (in contrast to the “program performance budgeting” of the 1960s). Similar to the idea of “Web 2.0”, which emphasizes information sharing, user-focus, and interactive collaboration in the World Wide Web, “PPB2.0” requires more public participation in defining how performance should be defined and measured and how fiscal resources should be allocated. It is no longer a managerial, analytical exercise that is shielded from political debates, value judgments, and participatory processes, as expected in traditional program performance budgeting (Schick, 1966). Instead, it seeks public input strategically and systematically to guide budgetary thinking and performance management, and it embraces both policy-level value debates, as well as the technical analysis at the micro-organizational level of resource allocation. It also extends performance budgeting exercises to the budget execution stage, so that performance measurement and citizen feedback on services are regularly reviewed

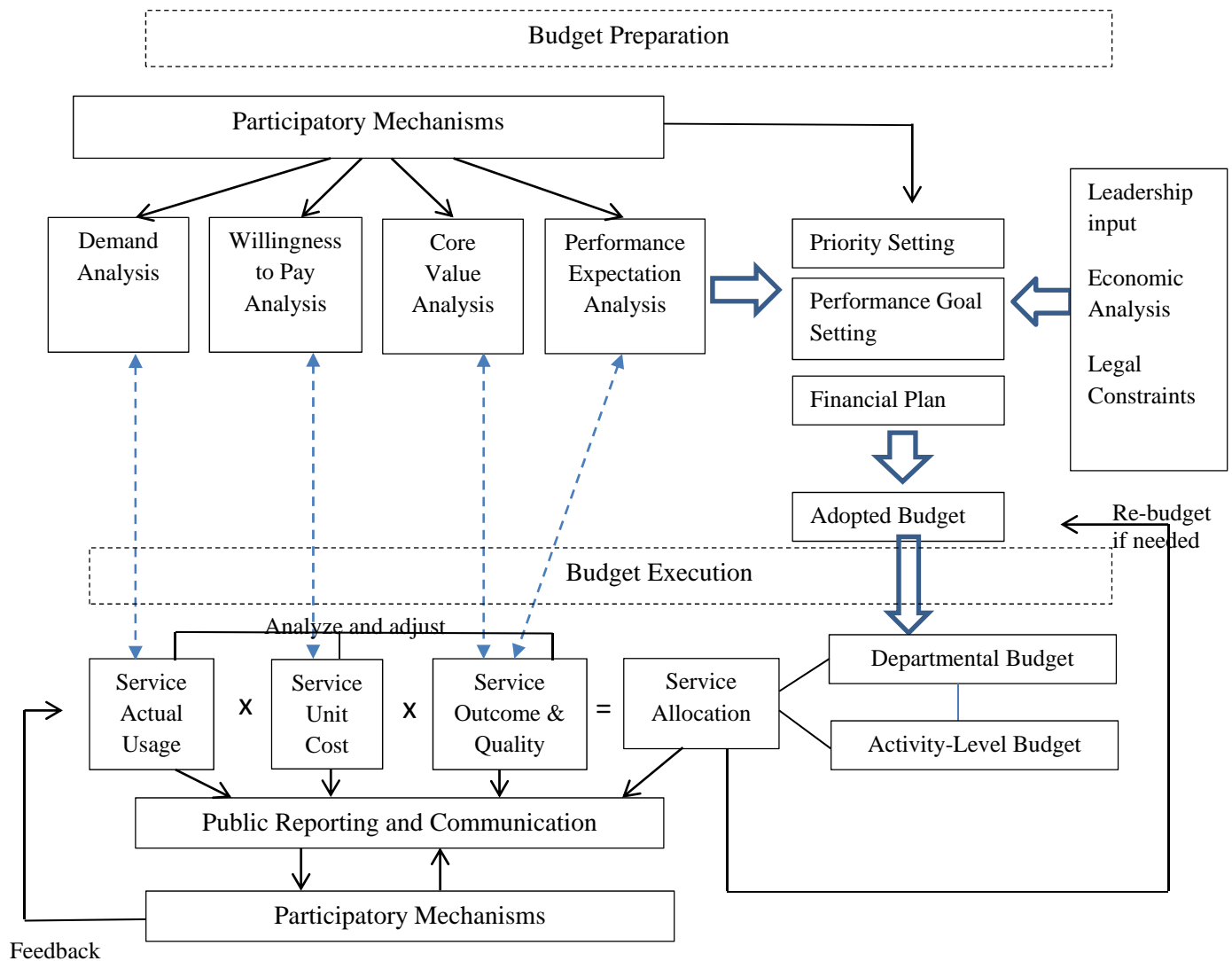
and used to adjust internal resource allocation after the departmental budget cap has been set. Finally, performance reports are no longer only prepared only for internal consumption. Instead, public performance reporting and citizen engagement are emphasized so that performance information is used to inform the public and solicit their feedback to improve resource allocation not only in the budget preparation stage but also in the budget execution stage.

Table 5. A Comparison of Traditional Performance Budgeting, Participatory Budgeting, and Participatory Performance Budgeting 2.0

	Participatory Budgeting	Traditional Performance Budgeting	Participatory Performance Budgeting 2.0
Purpose	Fulfillment of democratic values, public education, building public support	Enhancement of managerial /program performance	Delivering results that matter to citizens, public education, building public support
Key mechanisms	Public input solicitation	Performance measurement, performance management, quantifiable performance monitoring and reporting	Citizen-driven performance measurement, outcome-oriented performance management focusing on citizen priorities, and public performance reporting and community dialogues
Analytical tools	Citizen survey, preference revelation exercise	Cost-efficiency and effectiveness analysis, performance benchmarking	Citizen survey, preference revelation exercise, derived importance analysis, cost-efficiency and effectiveness analysis, social marketing analysis
Key participants	The general public	Managers, and to some extent, policymakers	The general public, managers, and policymakers
Orientation	Political	Managerial and analytical	Policy-oriented at the macro-level, and managerial at the micro-program level
Unit of analysis	Macro-level spending and taxation decisions	Program-level decisions	Services received by citizens/users
Information focus	Public preferences	Activity	Core values and results that public services try to deliver
Budgetary focus	Integrating public input into the executive and legislative phases of budget preparation	Integrating rational analysis into the executive and legislative phases of budget preparation	Integrating performance analysis and public input not only in budget preparation, but more importantly, in budget execution
Reporting clientele	The public, particularly taxpayers	Managers and policymakers	The public, especially service users
Key budget stage	Budget preparation	Budget preparation	Budget preparation execution

Figure 7 presents a model of PPB2.0. Many city governments today may have already institutionalized some of the activities in the model, such as citizen participation activities, performance measurement, activity-based management, and public performance reporting. However, very seldom are these components linked coherently, systematically, analytically, and strategically to foster public understanding of budgetary choices and dialogue with governments. PPB2.0 tries to address this limitation by integrating various participatory mechanisms and analytical tools at the budget preparation and budget execution stages.

Figure 7. A Model of Participatory Performance Budgeting 2.0



Conclusion: Public Values, Tough Tradeoffs, and Participatory Performance Budgeting

In the 1980s, when the U.S. federal government was facing a significant deficit problem and there was significant outcry against the ineffectiveness of the government institution, George Frederickson (1982) wrote,

“The citizens are groping for changes that they believe will improve the effectiveness of government agencies. There is no question that the citizens are deeply concerned about the education of their children, but those same citizens have very serious questions about the effectiveness of the public schools. Citizens are deeply concerned about lawlessness, crime, and law enforcement but they have serious reservations about the effectiveness of the police. What the citizens want is change and they want fundamental change. ... Cutback is a short-range strategy. What is needed in long-range change. Public administration needs to sharpen its creative abilities and its capacity to develop alternatives. Where innovation, change and responsiveness is occurring, it tends, in my judgment, to be associated with what is called here ‘a new civism.’ The effective public administration of the future should be intimately tied to citizenship, the citizenry generally, and to the effectiveness of public managers who work directly with the citizenry.” (p. 501-502)

It seems these comments are still applicable today. In the face of fiscal stress, citizens still care about their quality of life and still expect to the government to deliver core services effectively and responsively. Therefore, it is critically important for public officials to work with citizens to understand their demand and needs, educate them about the new fiscal reality, and collaborate with the public, business leaders, and nonprofit organizations to rethink how services should be delivered without compromising their qualities too significantly. Performance and citizen engagement are inseparable.

Unfortunately, the practice of performance budgeting for the past few decades has shied away from “civism”. Instead, it has been driven primarily by economic analysis and budget analysts and is seldom integrated with the citizen participatory movement. As a result, even though it has become more scientifically sound and analytically sophisticated, it has also been criticized as administratively burdensome and politically irrelevant. That is why in recent years, there more skepticism has been expressed about the relevancy and usefulness performance budgeting, especially during the bust years of the current government finance environment (Hou, et al., 2011).

Nonetheless, one should never confuse or equate the current institutional design of performance budgeting systems with the importance of performance information in the budgetary process. Politicians and the general public care about performance. For example, if a president fails to respond decisively and effectively in an emergency, if a government agency fails to serve the needs of the public, and if the quality of life continues to decline in a

community, citizens know and will hold government officials accountable. That is why performance information, such as crime rates, economic growth rates, poverty rates, caseload demand of public services, and responsiveness of government agencies, is always included in budgetary debates and mass media reports. Performance information still matters, even in an economic downturn and under fiscally stressful circumstances. In fact, it matters even more because government agencies have to prioritize more carefully. Unfortunately, the traditional performance budgeting model, which focuses primarily on economic analysis and instrumental rationality, has often failed to integrate the citizens and the stakeholders' perspectives in designing, analyzing, reporting, and using performance measures. As a result, its technicality and complexity obscure its political relevancy.

In response, this paper suggests the need to combine citizen participation and performance budgeting more systematically in the 21st century and urges performance budgeting to move toward the “2.0 world”, in which users have more voice and interaction to determine the system design and usage. As shown in Figure 7, the administrative components and technical tools of PPB2.0 already exist. For example, activity-based costing and management have been advocated in the public sector for decades. New platforms of public engagement and strategies, especially through online and mobile technologies (Leighninger, 2011) and more sophisticated analysis of citizen surveys results and other community data, including the usage of geographical information system and data mining, are already commonly used by many communities in recent years. Also, more citizen-friendly public performance reporting has been recommended and practiced in many communities (Ho and Coates, 2004; Epstein, 2005; Sanger, 2008). Therefore, what government officials and policymakers need is to “connect the dots”. Instead of viewing these performance management and participatory mechanisms and tools run by different departments or programs separately, they should be viewed and used as integral parts of a citizen-centered, performance-driven system that tries to improve service outcomes and quality of life factors that matter to residents and public service users. Also, performance budgeting should not be viewed narrowly as a legislative tool in the appropriation process. It is equally, if not more, important to use citizen-driven performance budgeting as a mechanism to help budget allocation among services, programs and activities after a budget has been adopted, so that agencies can achieve more with less and deliver greater value to the public given the fiscal resource constraints.

History has shown that major reforms and innovative ideas tend to happen because of drastic contextual changes and real policy needs. Perhaps the Great Recession and the foreseeable fiscal strain in its aftermath will trigger a new wave of public administration reform that will help us move beyond the efficiency and effectiveness focus of New Public Management and stimulate new thinking about how civic-consciousness, community building, articulation and protection of core public values, data analysis, performance management, and public budgeting can be integrated more fully and strategically in governmental institutional design so that the public good will continue to be served despite mounting fiscal challenges.

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